REMARKS

Claims 2, 5 - 11, 13, 16 - 19, 21, 24 - 27, 29, and 33 - 35 have been amended. Claims 1, 3 - 4, 12, 14 - 15, 20, 22 - 23, 28, 30 - 32, and 37 have been cancelled from the application without prejudice. Claims 38 - 47 have been added. No new matter has been introduced with these amendments or added claims, all of which are supported in the specification as originally filed. Claims 2, 5 - 11, 13, 16 - 19, 21, 24 - 27, 29, 33 - 36, and 38 - 47 remain in the application.

I. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Paragraph 8 of the Office Action dated January 12, 2005 (hereinafter, "the Office Action") states that Claims 1, 2, 5, 6 - 13, 16 - 21, and 24 - 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Stallings, "Cryptography and Network Security 2nd Edition", in view of U. S. Patent 5,940,591 to Boyle. Paragraph 18 of the Office Action states that Claims 3, 14, 22, 28 - 30, and 33 - 35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Stallings in view of Boyle, and further in view of U. S. Patent 6,636,520 to Jason et al. Applicants have cancelled independent Claims 1, 12, 20, and 28 from the application without prejudice (and have substituted therefor independent Claims 38, 41, 44, and 47, respectively). Applicants have also cancelled dependent Claims 3, 14, 22, and 30 from the application without prejudice. The rejections are respectfully traversed with regard to the claims as currently presented.

Applicant respectfully submits that the references fail to teach limitations of his independent Claims 38, 41, 44, and 47, including: mutually-authenticated network-layer security

associations established between end devices and boundary devices; and packet-handling directives that are generated by an access control function, based upon access privileges corresponding to authenticated identities associated with the end devices, and which a security enforcement function in a boundary device uses to either forward or discard data packets. Applicant therefore respectfully submits that independent Claims 38, 41, 44, and 47 are allowable over the references, and that dependent Claims 2, 5 - 11, 13, 16 - 19, 21, 24 - 27, 29, 33 - 35, 39 - 40, 42 - 43, and 45 - 46 are therefore patentable by virtue of their dependency on these independent claims. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the §103 rejections.

Applicant also wishes to note a typographical error that was inadvertently made in the Response dated October 27, 2004. On page 19, lines 16- 17 thereof, it is stated that Applicant's invention does not use "tunnel security associations". The reference under discussion (namely, Fig. 13.10(c) of Stallings) illustrated a nested tunnel, showing an end-to-end tunnel between two hosts in addition to a tunnel between two gateways. Applicant wishes to clarify that his invention does not use nested tunnel security associations, in contrast to the cited teachings from Stallings.

II. Allowable/Allowed Claims

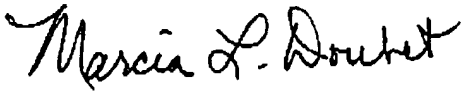
Paragraph 25 of the Office Action states that Claims 4, 15, 23, and 31 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claims, but would be allowable if presented in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Paragraph 26

of the Office Action states that Claims 36 and 37 are allowed. Dependent Claims 4, 15, 23, and 31 have been cancelled from the application without prejudice, and their subject matter has been incorporated into newly-added independent Claims 38, 41, 44, and 47, respectively.

III. Conclusion

Applicant respectfully request reconsideration of the pending rejected claims, withdrawal of all presently outstanding rejections, and allowance of all remaining claims at an early date.

Respectfully submitted,



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